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In This Issue

Ways and means of strengthening the urch's ministry are described on Page 1 Mark Rich, Professor of Rural Church the Bible College of Missouri, Columbia.

Benson Y. Landis interprets the poems Robert P. Tristram Coffin on Page 3. is is the second article on the Poet from ine that Dr. Landis has contributed. It lso one of a series of articles on Ameri- poets who have emphasized rural ues.

Are cooperatives a vital part of the erican way of life? See Page 5.

Austin Armitstead gives his impressions the Methodist Town and Country Con- ation, held at Bloomington, Indiana, y 22-25, 1955—Page 7.

What is the basic cause of poverty in erican agriculture? Karl Gertel describes nd other causes on Pages 8-11.

For a description of ministry in a mining p in Alberta—see Page 13.

Book Review—Page 16.

No. 110
November, 1955

Strengthening the Church's Ministry

MARK RICH

• At no time in history have men had more skills, and never before have time and space been so compressed by the medium of speed. More mechanical aids and gadgets await the behest of men than ever before. Great masses of people have a freedom, a potential for living heretofore available only to the minorities. The Golden Age is here! Is it? Our generation, which could be the most advanced, the most enlightened, the most capable of great good, has no tight hold on a central abiding faith. We still destroy one another and we seek to obliterate our boredom in riotous living.

This kind of an age needs churches —strong churches. How can the church's ministry be strengthened? We shall here emphasize three means: 1) an improved ministry; 2) a dedicated laity; and 3) effective cooperation between the two.

An Improved Ministry

The leadership in any enterprise is one of the most crucial elements in its success. Under good leadership a church is likely to thrive. Under poor leadership it languishes. It may be said that there are three kinds of ministers.

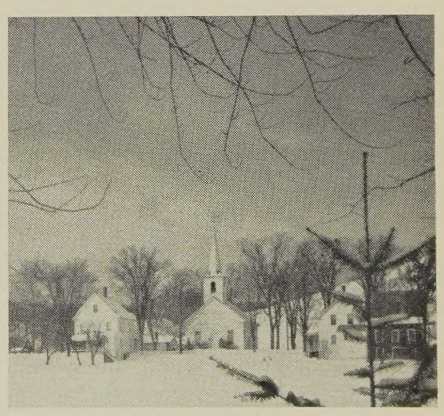
First are those whose sensitiveness to responsibility and whose concern for the conversion of men and their institutions is so keen that they burn themselves out in service and activity. Not many belong to this class. Their years, like those of their Master, are few and fruitful.

Second, are those so dedicated that they earnestly and steadily improve their skills, multiply their good deeds and grow in spirit and comprehension. These so feel the high purpose of their calling that they persistently discipline themselves for better service. They act like men under orders; men whose faces are set toward the new Jerusalem.

Third are those who are complacently content to remain as they are, imposing upon themselves no obligation for improvement or for service beyond that required by easy effort. These drift along as if there were no urgency, as if God's miraculous powers could compensate for any slothfulness, awkwardness and dullness on the part of his servants. In this class are the sporting clergymen who amuse themselves in various ways while their parish work remains undone. Others through aimless undirected activity allow the hours and years to slip by without accomplishment. Again, there are those just sitting by until they retire, lacking vision and imperative to use even the talents which they have.

If the church is to become stronger there must be more leaders in the second group—the group that makes the steady, long pull. Recently, the record of an ordinary minister was read. With no outstanding talents he was considered by some a failure for he never served large churches. Yet, he had a quality of persistence in good work which gave distinction to his long ministry. He leaves a record of churches directed toward self-support, to churches unified, early experiments in Christian education in rural schools and membership increases. All in all, it was a record of an ordinary man who through tire-

(*Continued on Page 2*)



Winston Pote from A. Devaney, N. Y.

(*Continued from Page* 1)
less service strengthened the church's ministry.

Helpful Qualities

Four qualities are helpful in placing a minister in this group:

First, a daily concern for an understanding of the Gospel, a desire to share with the people in growing measure the message of Christ. No minister can find the gospel once and for all. Constant and eager study is essential.

Second, a minister disciplines himself to do those things necessary to fulfilling his mission. This discipline is self-imposed. A minister must say, "I will study," and then study; "I will call," and then call; "I will write that article for the paper," and do it on time. He is as a horse, bridled. His Master's business is so urgent that the servant is disciplined. The minister may well memorize the doggerel:

I'se gwine ter preach a sermon,
And dis here am de text—
Dat helfway doin's ain't no 'count
For dis world and de next.

Third, the minister possesses skills that will help him in his work. As a pianist masters the keyboard by regular and repeated practice so the minister who strengthens his church sets about mastering the skills of his office. What a herculean task, but how rewarding a pursuit! Since a minister is a leader of people, a director of the activities of a church, he endlessly seeks to perfect the skill for planning and working with people. No one ever completely masters the skills, but those who seek to do so are amply rewarded. The work of the church is greatly blessed.

There are many other skills such as reading the scriptures so they have the accent of the word of God, conducting a service of worship so through it the presence of Christ becomes real, preaching with effectiveness and calling—to the end that people grow in grace. To these should be added a knowledge of the best experience in rural church work, acquaintance with tested methods, and familiarity with the rural church movement. A minister without skills jeopardizes the spiritual growth of his people even as a doctor without skills endangers the lives of his patients. C. J. Galpin in a well-known address, *If I Were a Rural Minister,* sums up the matter. "If I were a rural minister, I would work at my task as hard, as unremittingly, as early, as late, as any of my parishioners. I could not excuse myself for inaction and short hours on the grounds of being engaged in much contemplation and thoughtful study; for I know the versatility of sloth, its subtility and intrigue. I would fight this thing tooth and nail."

Fourth, the minister should have a love for rural people. It goes without saying that certain ministers are better fitted for the city than for the country. Let them follow the call. But, let the country minister be called, too, as Carey felt the call to missionary service. Blessed is the minister who feels a similar compulsion to work in rural places.

A Dedicated Laity

An effective church has consecrated membership. If one could choose three essential qualities to be possessed by members of a church what would they be?

Within the limits of time individual members will read their Bibles and at least one religious periodical; they will attend at least one Christian study group and they will associate themselves with other Christians at church conferences.

An effective church is one in which the spiritual ideals and religious activities of the people are deeply set in the cultural pattern of the people. It is difficult for people to be religious when their singing, their literature, their recreation and group activities are dissociated from their religious life. A home, for instance, where grace is never said at the table suffers a handicap to religious growth.

The third characteristic of laymen is that each person devotedly engages in at least one type of Christian service. Some can do much more.

Effective Cooperation

If a church had a minister with the qualities listed above and laymen who possessed the characteristics here named, it would seem that they should compose a strong and effective church. Yet, that is not enough. A strong church is marked by a cohesion between pastor and people, a unity between leader and follower, a teaming up of the clergy and the laity.

It is the combination of minister and people working together that makes the church strong. To achieve this goal requires organization, a church council, a group that realistically faces the issues before the church and leads in an effective program. The same type of ministry can be extended between churches in an inter-church council, to meet the larger issues of community life.

Within such a church groups are working, praying, planning, thinking and growing. The pastor is the leader, but the people carry the responsibility. A spirit of unity, of comradeship, a sense of common mission ties pastor and congregation together. Together they are working with and for God in redeeming the world. This makes a successful church.

The Good Shepherd

• "Only a gentle and unselfish man can be a good shepherd; he must be the kind of a man the smallest lamb can trust."

These words are the caption of a beautiful photograph, in color, reproduced in THE FARM, a quarterly, Cincinnati, Ohio, Summer Issue, 1955, with an article, "The Master's Touch." The shepherd who appears with his sheep is Harold Barber, the Englishman who came to the University of Kentucky thirty years ago, to show Kentucky farmers how to "take the guesswork out of the sheep business."

"A veteran shepherd and a skilled craftsman," is the sub-title of Charles R. Koch's article on Harold Barber. It is written that both associates and competitors refer to Barber as "the world's greatest shepherd."

Poems from Maine

BENSON Y. LANDIS

Robert P. Tristram Coffin felt that poet should be a "reaffirmer of life nd a believer in certain compact nd lasting fundamental patterns hat it is the salvation of mankind to elieve in." He did not mind if he ppeared "naive" to certain modern ritics. He would, like the Elizaethan poets, think and feel in whole designs. "Poetry is saying the best ne can about life." His career as a nique teacher and as a poet from Maine who spoke a universal language, I have tried to interpret in n earlier article.

Now I wish to sample the rich are of his poems. Rich fare is perhaps not a bad term for the output f a man who often wrote in prose nd poetry of the food and cooking n the state of Maine. One of his rose books, now out of print, was Mainstays of Maine, and had to do vith berries, dumplings, and the versatile merits of salt pork. He had trong prejudices in the realm of ood and was dogmatic when he prented a recipe: "Lobster Stew Coffin." I am quoting from Collected Poems (Macmillan, New York. 1949. $6.00). A number of other volumes f his verse are also in print.

Possibly much of his thinking of eople and things was summed up n a poem, "Things Enough":

That man can thank his lucky stars
Whose things to keep are few,
To which the rain and moth and rust
Find little harm to do . . .

ity for the hungry ones,
The ragged and ill-shod
tree that's tall and straight enough
To make him think of God.

In a relatively long poem, "Apogia," he made his declarations:

, made of clay inflamed with sun,
omething solid still have come.
I have made a book and bred
A son to read it when I'm dead.
have kept the ancient law
nd made my bricks without the straw . . .

od in flesh, a hymn in bees
nd heaven in a place of trees . . .

have kept the ancient law,
have written what I saw.

There is a poem, "Strange Holiness," as well as a book of poems under that title, for which Mr. Coffin received the Pulitzer Prize for poetry:

There is strange holiness around
Our common days on common ground . . .

Once I met it face to face
In a fox pressed by the chase . . .

His beauty was not meant for me
With my dull eyes, so close to see . . .

His eyes went out as in a gust
His beauty crumbled into dust . . .

But there his fish lay like a key
To the bright, lost mystery.

He sang of "the best" once in a poem entitled "Abraham Lincoln":

The finest things are very common ones,
The million times a million little suns . . .
When spring comes and the evening robin calls,
Ten million little boys in overalls . . .
And there may be another Lincoln there
Under the freckles and the tousled hair.

The total effect of a few rare sights under the title, "Lantern in the Snow":

This thing is beautiful, I know,
A lantern burning in the snow,
Which diggers left so men might see
Their hole beneath my lilac tree . . .

There are only four or five
Such sights for any man alive
In all the years he has to go
Like this lantern in the snow.

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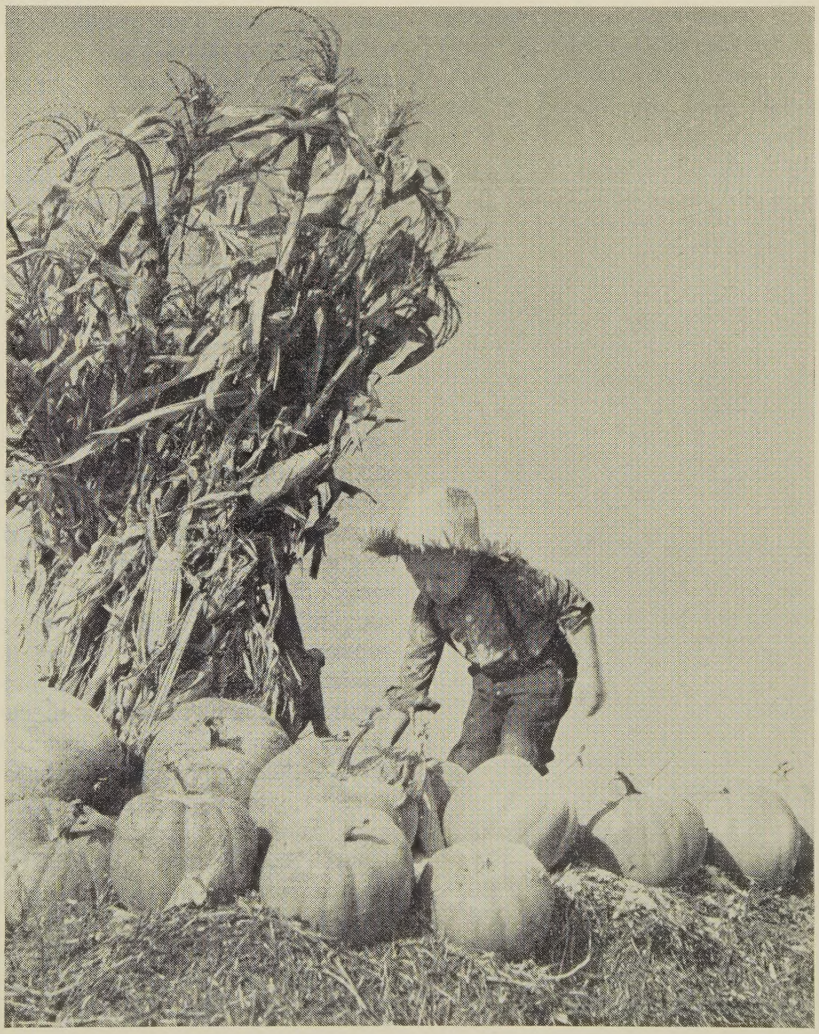

David W. Corson from A. Devaney, N. Y.

(*Continued from Page 3*)

Both depth and breadth were in his observation, "When Country People Move to Town":

When country people move to town, the old
Country things will keep as tight a hold
As they can, and fit in smaller places.
The pig will go first, for his are graces
That do not please a crowded neighborhood.
But there will be the fragrance of green wood . . .

Once after a public reading, a woman told Mr. Coffin about a childhood experience, hearing a baby lamb brought out a cold March night into a farm house:

The thing her parents were about
Out there where the embers were
Was something sad and beautiful
That had to do with God and her.

She lost the lamb in sleep at last
But her closed eyes were full of tears
And that night would remain with her
Like a rainbow through the years.

Even an abandoned country church had meaning for a neighborhood that preserved it even though the people did not go there for sermons anymore:

They like to have a good mark when they plow
To run their furrows by. A church's spire
Is about the finest mark of all.

The poet must have felt a genuine affection for the small churches in small places, with buildings "White as Milk." These lines are from several poems:

All God's beauty came to church;
The sea fog wreathed the columns round . . .

He could not separate the thought
Of God from daisies white and hot . . .
For the church he went to when
He was eight and nine and ten
And good friends with the trees and sun,
Was a small white country one . . .
The grass flowed round it east and west,
And one blind had a robin's nest.
Before the sermon was half over,
It turned to fragrance of red clover.
The man in church sat back and glowed all through,
He heard the sermon, but it did not hide
The rhythm of the comforting old hymn
Of friendship that was going on outside,
And every inch of him belled out with pride.

When a farmer came to town to talk to the poet, the husbandman was awkward and withdrawn. But when the poet visited the farmer, "it was a different story." He was "in all his glory," and relaxed, and a bigger man than when he called on the poet in the town.

We stood in the warm fragrance of the cuds
His baby calves were chewing, and the floods
Of the cool smells of apple flowers flowed
In upon us there, and his face glowed,
Not because he suddenly was shy,
But because he was as bold as the blue sky.

The Chairman's Corner

The Pastor of a Multi-Denominational Church

• The pastor of a multi-denominational church will find that there is a central, basic Christian truth adhered to by all the participating denominations, yet the methods and modes of expressing this truth may be as different as immersion is different from sprinkling in baptism. The method of serving the communion may be different. The mode of receiving new members into the church may be different. All these differences in such a program may create serious problems for the minister who has been rigidly trained in church polity and the methods of administering the sacraments and ordinances of his denomination.

The pastor serving in such a situation must possess unusual ministerial qualities such as:

1. Ability to train and familiarize himself with every detail of church polity, doctrine, and practice in each participating denomination.

2. He must be sufficiently broad in mind and spirit to fully appreciate the peculiar practices of each denomination and to faithfully administer the rites and ordinances of each denomination as the occasion may require. If baptism by immersion is required, even though otherwise trained, he should learn how to immerse skillfully and spiritually, and be as ready to baptize in this method as by sprinkling. The Lord's Supper should be celebrated at different times according to the method of each denomination.

3. The minister of a multi-denominational church should faithfully attend all the local judicatories of each denomination.

4. The minister should faithfully read the journals and literature of each denomination in his group.

5. The minister should bring into his church as frequently as possible national and regional leaders of each denomination to speak to the people and to acquaint them with the church.

6. The minister should faithfully present to his congregation the various causes of all the participating denominations, such as missions, education, etc.

The pastorate of a multi-denominational church is a high calling and when well done is rewarding.

—Henry S. Randolph

"Christian Stewardship of the Land"

• Early in June a conference was held at the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, to consider the responsibilities of the Church for stewardship of the land. Nearly eighty rural church executives, local ministers, and representatives of government and farm agencies participated.

A report of this conference is now ready for distribution. It bears the title, "Christian Stewardship of the Land," and it may be procured from your denominational rural church executive or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., for 40 cents per copy.

Harvest Festival

• Have you overlooked ordering *An Order of Service for a Harvest Festival?* If you have, you may still secure copies from your denominational board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

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Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Are Cooperatives a Vital Part of the American Way?

• ASK the independent grocer on the corner of your Main Street why he joined with several thousand others like him to set up a cooperative grocery wholesale. He will tell you that, today, he can buy his groceries at the same price the big chain does; and without it, he would not be in business. He shares the costs and the savings of this wholesale with all the others who are cooperating with him. The independents and the chains each are part of the American Way.

ASK the members of the manufacturers' association in a number of states why they mutually share the cost of liability insurance.

ASK the bankers in your community why they share the cost of operating a clearing house.

ASK the businessmen why they share the cost of a retail credit bureau.

ASK the department store owner why he, with others, shares the cost of a city delivery service or the cost of sending a buyer to a distant city in the U.S. or abroad.

ASK the city worker why he and others in the same organization, or building, jointly operate a credit union.

ASK the hardware dealer why he shares the cost of a cooperative hardware wholesale, and the cost of various types of insurance which he needs.

ASK the railroad company why it shares, with other railroads, the cost of a bridge across the river, the cost of operating a freight terminal, or a passenger station; and why together certain railroads share the costs and margins of the Railway Express Agency, Inc.

ASK your newspaper why it cooperates to share the cost of the Associated Press.

ASK your neighbor why he bought his life insurance through a mutual company.

ASK your radio or TV stations why they mutually share the costs of many programs with other stations.

ASK any farmer why he shares, with other farmers, the cost of purchasing some of his supplies, or his credit, or his electricity, or the marketing of some of his products; or the providing of other services.

ASK yourself why you share the cost of a fire company for your community rather than to have one of your own.

ASK your denominational executive why the churches combine to send missionaries, to prepare and print their literature, and to form councils of churches.

The answer will be the same in every case. In our competitive enterprise system the most efficient way to do a job is the only way that survives. And, in every type of business —except a few of the very largest ones—it is necessary to join with others who have similar problems in order to get the job done economically and efficiently.

We join in mutual enterprises so that we may have more dollars in our pockets as individuals, and that means a higher standard of living.

The big difference between our country and many others is that we have a great middle class. Cartels and peasants go together—there is no place for either in the American Way.

If an individual or a group in the city thinks that farming is a very lucrative business, they are at liberty to buy a farm or farms and prove or disprove their belief.

If an individual or a group of farmers or laborers think that owning a particular type of store or factory is an easy way to make a living, they are free to buy or start one.

Our American Way rests on individual initiative first; and secondly, on the fact that combinations of small, independently-owned business concerns working on a mutual or cooperative basis, with several not-

(*Continued on Page* 6)

(*Continued from Page 5*)

able exceptions, have been able to match the competition of our largest business organizations.

Our antitrust laws are sometimes ineffective today and the competition of groups of relatively small businessmen, through mutual or cooperative arrangements, are more effective in keeping us out of monopoly situations. There are only 3,300 corporations in the U.S. employing more than 1,000 persons, but there are 3 million enterprises employing fewer than 10 people. This is not counting the 5 million individual farms, each of which is a business enterprise and most of which are family operated.

Farmers buy through their own cooperatives (their purchasing departments) less than half as much in dollar volume of farm production supplies as the independent grocers buy in groceries through their own cooperative wholesales. In cooperative marketing, farmers market about the same dollar volume as independent grocers buy cooperatively.

This amounts to less than one-quarter of the products that leave the farm. The proportion of all farm business handled through the farmers' own cooperatives is about the same as it was fifteen years ago, and if you added together all of the assets of all the farmer cooperatives in the U.S., they would total only half that of General Motors Corporation.

Now, what about taxes in our American Way?

Well, the organizations that get hit the hardest are the ordinary corporations—our federal income tax laws at present tax them double. All net margins are taxed first in the hands of the corporation and, except for minor credits, again in the hands of the individuals who own the corporations, when paid to them in dividends. This seems unfair.

Other types of business are taxed only once—the individuals who own them pay the tax on all net income. This applies alike to the singly-owned business and to the partnership. Together they account for more than four out of five of all businesses. Should anyone urge that any of these be taxed twice? We think it would make more sense to remove the double taxation that is now applied to corporations.

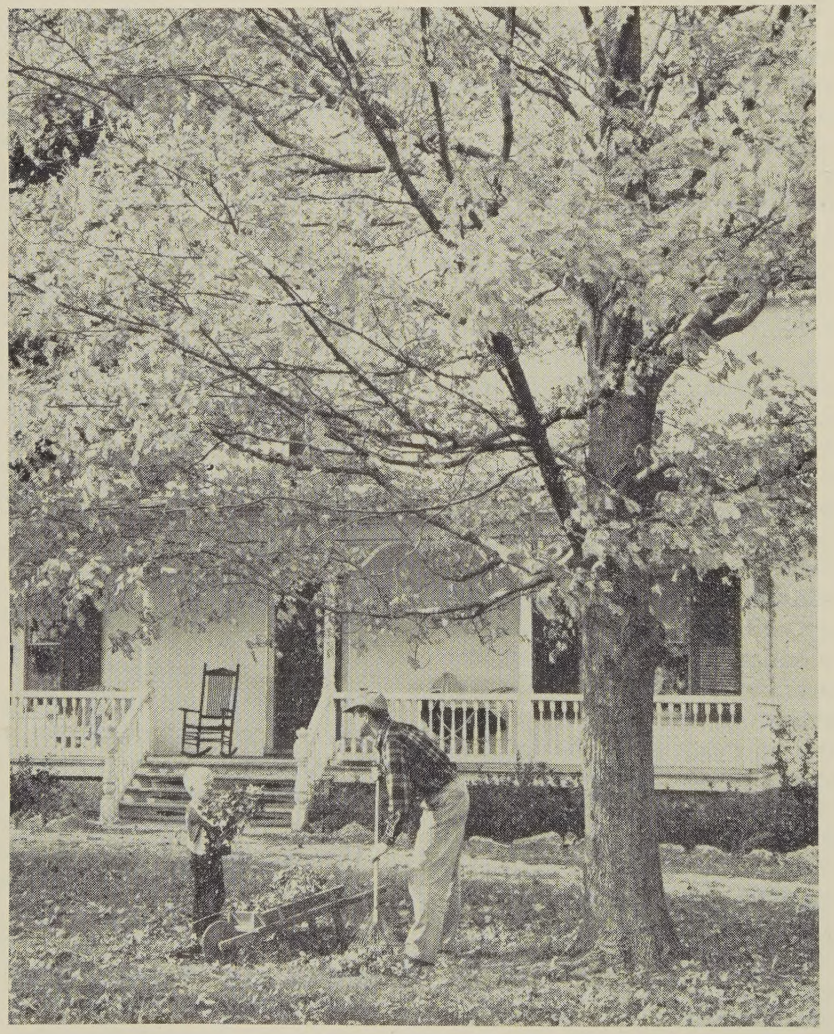
Of course, any business, of any type, can contract with its patrons in advance to return all margins over cost on a pro rata basis, so that the business organization has no income of its own. The Ford Motor Company, in 1914, announced that if it sold 300,000 cars in 1915, each purchaser would be refunded $50. The goal was reached, $15 million was refunded according to contract, and this amount was not taxable to the Ford Motor Company. Rather than return all margins on an equal basis to members and to non-members, many of the larger farmer cooperatives elect to be double taxes.

When the late Senator Taft stated that "Cooperatives are as American as baseball," he knew what he was talking about. It is now more than 200 years since Benjamin Franklin organized the first mutual fire insurance company in Philadelphia.

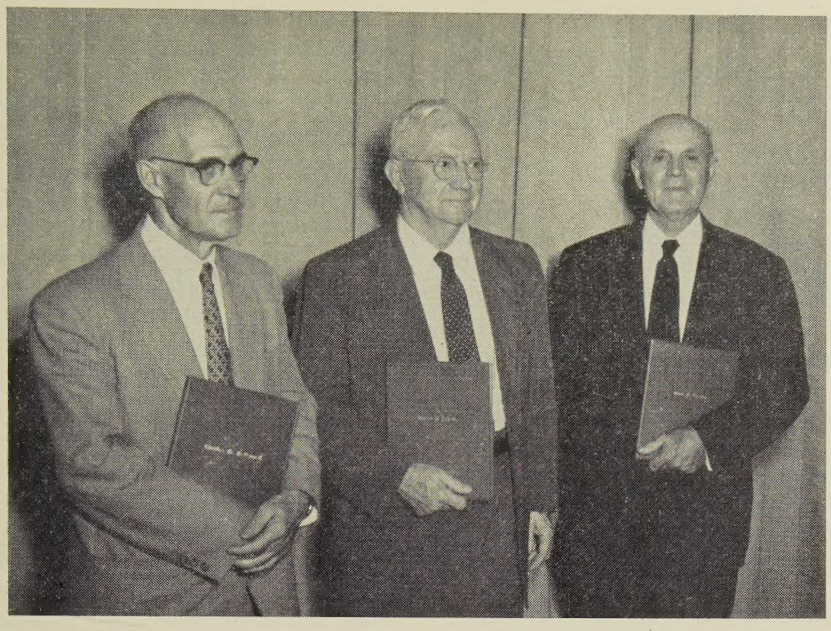
Are cooperatives a part of the American Way? May we quote President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who said, "Cooperation is the means by which free men solve problems or tackle jobs too big for the individual. Farmer Cooperatives are an essential device for maintaining the independent family farm. . . ."

Equally, or perhaps more important is the fact that, across the board, cooperatives and mutual groups of all kinds help to keep our private enterprise system competitive. This is good for all of us.

—Published by The American Institute of Cooperation



David W. Corson from A. Devaney, N. Y.



Left to right: Charles M. McConnell, Ralph A. Felton, and Mark A. Dawber

Three Methodist Rural Leaders Honored

Mark A. Dawber, Ralph A. Felon, and Charles M. "Pat" McConnell, names familiar to many of you, were honored by the first awards given by Methodism to leaders who have contributed to the rural areas of church work. The presentation of these awards marked the high point for me as I attended the third National Methodist Town and Country Church Conference held at Indiana University, Bloomington, July 22-25, 1955.

The Rev. Mark A. Dawber was given his award in recognition of his life-time of service to men and women in town and country as a pastor, professor, denominational and ecumenical executive. Doctor Dawber was formerly secretary of the Home Missions Council of North America, forerunner of the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Doctor Dawber is now serving the Community Church at Long Beach, L. I., New York.

The Rev. Ralph A. Felton, former professor of rural sociology at Drew Theological Seminary was honored for his work as a missionary, professor and author and research student. Doctor Felton resides in Madison, New Jersey.

The Rev. Charles M. McConnell ("Pat") has retired from long service as professor of town and country church at Boston University School of Theology, and makes his home at Deering, New Hampshire.

I was only one of approximately 1600 ministers and laymen attending this conference to be thrilled by this special recognition. The emphasis that is being felt in town and country churches is because of the service of men like these three and many others in other denomiantions. This is not an official report, but one based on the impressions I received at this conference. I am convinced that the rural church in America presents opportunities for service for those who want to dedicate themselves to this special work.

One of the valuable experiences was on the Sunday when 214 teams of ministers and laymen visited in town and country churches within a seventy-five mile radius of Bloomington. The team I was a member of went to a small church on a circuit, near Brazil, Indiana. There was a minister from an Illinois church, a laywoman from Central Kansas, and a layman from the western part of North Carolina. We didn't know one another when we met at 7 a.m., but we did by the end of the day, and only regretted there were not more experiences like this. At the church near Brazil, the other minister led the adult Bible class, I preached and the laymen spoke informally about various matters.

The church was a great deal different from the church I serve. We have about 250 members—they had about 70. We have an organist—they had a man who played a guitar. We have a formal worship service—they had no order of worship, only the "preliminaries" and then I preached. Yes, it was different in many respects, and yet the people of that church weren't basically any different from the people in my own church.

The purpose of this conference, called by the Methodist Council of Bishops, was to "develop an adequate Christian program in town and country areas pertaining to people in their relationships to God, to soil and all natural resources, and to family, church and community welfare." I believe that we obtained an understanding of these problems and found some of the answers.

We delved into many problems in the sixteen study groups, including local town and country work, group ministry, recruiting and training leadership, colleges and theological schools, evangelism, family life, Christian vocations, community outreach, class structure, stewardship, the world situation in respect to land and food, church building, worship, and music.

Outstanding leaders like Dr. Arthur Flemming, Dr. John Baxter Howes, Dr. Raymond Miller, Bishop Gerald Ensley, Alexander Nunn, Dr. Herbert Stotts, and many others added to an enjoyable and instructive conference.

Alexander Nunn, managing editor of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER stated: "We are here to revive the church. The high cost of maintaining small rural churches is not our real problem—it is the penalty we pay for having neglected them. The

(*Continued on Page* 8)

(*Continued from Page 7*)

problem is not whether we can find the money, but whether we have got enough religion. Our problem is not pee-wee churches, but pee-wee thinking and pee-wee religion."

In summary, I might say that as an individual I believe the future for town and country churches will be determined by our ability to use our imagination. Added to this is the need for continued over-all strategy in an interdenominational way. These conferences demand of their attendants an application of the findings.

—Austin H. Armitstead

Thanksgiving Day

Give us courage and gaity and the quiet mind.
Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies.
Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavors.
If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that
which is to come, that we be brave in peril,
constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath,
and in all changes of fortune, and down to the
gates of death, loyal and loving one another.

—Robert Louis Stevenson

Low Income Farmers in the United States*

KARL GERTEL

• "In his wealthiest of nations where per capita income is the highest in the world, more than one-fourth of the families who live on American farms still have cash incomes of less than one thousand dollars a year. They neither share fully in our economic and social progress nor contribute as much as they would like and can contribute to the nation's production of goods and services. . . . We must open wider the doors of opportunity to our million and a half farm families with extremely low incomes—for their own well being and for the good of our country and all our people." Special message to Congress by the President of the United States, April 27, 1955.

Most people are vaguely aware that there are many poor farmers in the United States but until recently the problem had not aroused too much concern. This was due partly to the low-income farmers themselves and partly to the communities in which they live. Farm people are proud folk, who often prefer to tighten their belts rather than ask for help. Similarly, many rural communities have the tradition of "taking care of their own" and these are slow to ask for outside help. The lack of concern was also due to failure to understand fully the situation in which our low-income farmers find themselves.

Popular Ideas

Professor Theodore W. Schultz, a noted student of farm problems at the University of Chicago, points out that many popular ideas about the causes of low farm income hinder progress in overcoming the problem. These ideas are misleading although there is just enough truth in some of them to make them sound plausible.

One idea is that many farmers may be poor in money but they have plenty of fresh and wholesome home-grown food and they are rich in many other respects, such as being close to nature and free and independent. A second idea is that some farmers have low incomes because they are either retired and too old to work or because they have too little ambition or intelligence to do better. People who just don't have what it takes and who fall behind are found not only in farming but in other businesses as well. Still another idea is that some farmers are poor because they are on poor and unproductive land. Sometimes the last two ideas are combined like this: Poor farmers tend to gravitate and concentrate on poor land where they earn low incomes. Finally, there is the idea that most low-income farmers are Negroes and "poor white folks" in the South and Mexicans and Indians in the West so that the difficulty is really a racial and cultural problem.

Let us look at a few facts and figures concerning the number of poor farmers, the level of their income and where they are found around the country. These figures are based on the U.S. Census of Agriculture and special studies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They help us examine the validity of the popular ideas about low-income farmers and throw some light on the basic cause of low farm income. Once we understand the causes of low farm income we can say what should be done about the problem and can appraise the effectiveness of what has been done so far.

The Plight of the Poor Farmer

According to the 1950 census there are about 5,380,000 farmers in the United States. We begin to get a grasp of the extent of low farm income when we realize that some 3,287,000 farms, or 61 percent of all American farms, reported gross sales of less than $2,500 for 1949. Out of this gross revenue feed, seed, fertilizer, rents, and other expenses had to be paid. Only the remaining net was available for family living.

How many people are involved when we consider the problem of low-income farms? Too many. About 60 percent, or 13 million, of the 22 million people living in farm households are on farms where sales of farm products in 1949 amounted to less than $2,500. How little these 60 percent of our farm people contribute to the nation's food supply is shown by the fact that they produce only 12 percent of all farm products sold. In contrast, the most productive fourth of both U.S. farms and

* From an address, given at The Pennsylvania State University's 1955 Summer Conference for Town and Country Pastors.

ırm people account for about three-ɔurths of all farm products sold.

ow Production Farms

The nearly 33 million farms sell-ıg less than $2,500 worth of farm roducts, fall into three groups. bout half are commercial farms, for hich farming is the main source of ıcome; nearly 20 percent are part-me farms for which off-farm income of major importance; and more an 30 percent are residential farms hich sold less than $250 worth of ırm products. The last group is ıade up of more homes than farms. includes people who work off the ırm as well as elderly and retired eople. To be counted as a farm a nit must have a land area of at east three acres and must produce 150 of agricultural products, not ɔunting garden stuffs. If the land rea is less than three acres, $150 orth of farm products must be sold. Ve shall refer to these three cate-ɔries as low-production farms.

Studies of the U. S. Department of griculture reveal that the average ıoney income in 1949 for these ıree low-production groups hovered round $2,000, except for a subgroup f commercial farms which sold om $250 to $1,999 of farm pro-ucts. This subgroup, which repre-ented some 700,000 families, had an verage cash income of only $975. constitutes the poorest group of merican farmers.

However, average income figures ın be misleading. A few families ith large incomes from nonfarm ɔurces could pull up the average ɔnsiderably above the earnings of ost families in the low-production roups. A more revealing insight is ɔtained from the fact that 2.8 mil-ɔn or more than half of all farm milies earned less than $2,000 in 950. More than 1.5 million farm milies earned less than $1,000.

Even after taking out the families hose heads are over 65, we still ıve nearly 1.7 million, or 63 per-nt of the three classes of low-pro-ıction farms that earn family in-ɔmes of less than $2,000 and nearly million that earn less than $1,000. ırt-time farmers under 65—who ɔrked off the farm for 100 days or more—also include a considerable percentage who earn less than $2,000 and 156,000 families who earn less than $1,000.

Providing Necessities

These figures dispel the idea that most low-income farm families are poor because the operators are elderly. It also refutes the contention that all part-time and residential farmers who produce few agricultural products for sale have considerable nonfarm income.

What about the idea that these low-production farms may be poor in money but rich in other things, such as plenty of fresh homegrown food and a rewarding way of life. It is true that the money incomes just quoted do not include the values of homegrown food or the values of rent-free houses which most farmers have. However, even if we allow for these two items, it is still doubtful whether the million and a half farm families with incomes of less than $1,000 a year can afford many of the things considered necessities of life by most of us.

Census figures show the low education of the operators, the scanty supply of productive resources and the low living level on low-production farms as compared with other farms. Whether you pick electricity or telephones, which most farmers in the high income groups take for granted, hot and cold running water or many other standards of comparison, low-production farms fall behind. Life on these farms offers few luxuries. When I look at these statistics, I am reminded of a colleague of mine who came from a Kentucky mountain farm and who has told me of the long backbreaking hours he toiled all year. When Christmas came around, all he could afford was a pair of new overalls.

It may be that some farm families prefer this type of life and do not care to live differently, but I doubt it. However, about two points there can be no dispute. First, these low-production farm families are not contributing to the material wealth of our Nation, and their children, who leave the farm in large numbers, do not have the preparation for life that other young Americans have. Their education and health are neglected. Second, you will agree that the least society can do is to provide our low-income families the chance to improve their material level of living if they want to do so.

Location

Where are most low-income farmers located? A glance at special maps prepared by the Department of Agriculture shows a heavy concentration in the South and the areas that border the South. These include the Cotton Belt which stretches from Georgia to East Texas and Oklahoma, the Ozark Mountains of southern Missouri and Alabama, the Appalachian Mountains that run through Tennessee and Kentucky, north into the Alleghenies of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Other areas include the northern part of the Lake States, northwestern New Mexico, the Cascade Mountains of Washington and Oregon, and small parts of Montana and Idaho.

Northwestern New Mexico is largely inhabited by Indians, and, of course, there are many Negro farmers in the South, particularly share-croppers. It is true that a great proportion of Negro farmers in the South fall in the low-productivity classes but the statistics show that a large proportion of white farmers in the South also fall in the same classes and there are several times as many poor white farmers as there are poor Negro farmers in the South. So although racial differences may contribute to the problem of low farm incomes, it is not a prime cause of the problem.

How about the idea that low-income farms are on poor land? It is true that the land in the Appalachians, the Ozarks, the cutover areas of the Lake States, and the Cascades are poor farmland, but take a look at the Mississippi Delta, a low-income region but one of the most fertile areas in the United States. There is the low-income area in New Mexico where the soil is no different from that in many other parts of the Southwest. Many experimental farms throughout the South have demon-

(*Continued on Page* 10)

(*Continued from Page* 9)

strated that with improved methods of farming, yields and returns can be obtained that are much above the average for the region. From an economic viewpoint, *if* the price of poor land is related to its earning capacity and *if* proper farming methods are used, there is no reason why poor land should mean poor living. Again we can say that poor land contributes to low farm incomes but it does not fully explain them.

Are the extensive low-farm income areas inhabited largely by unambitious and unintelligent farmers? This is not too plausible a theory. Many of the low-income farmers have had very little schooling but whenever determined local efforts have been made to improve the level of the community through dissemination of knowledge and sufficient credit, such as in the TVA area, the local people have responded. The experience of operators of factories that have moved South also demonstrate that workers from the low-income farming areas are as dependable as their northern brothers.

The Roots of Rural Poverty

What then are the causes of widespread low income and poverty in American agriculture? The immediate causes are not hard to perceive. The vast majority of low-income farmers do not have enough land, livestock, machinery and working capital, or the know-how to run a profitable farm business and to use their labor efficiently.

To be in position to do something about it, we must know the basic causes that led to large numbers of small farms without sufficient resources to provide the farm family with adequate living. We have seen that old age or incompetence of the farmer is not an adequate explanation. Racial problems are not the whole story, although the racial problem combined with the problems of such institutions as the sharecropper system contributes to widespread low farm income. Similarly poor land contributes to the problem, particularly in the Applachians and the Ozark ridge and narrow valley country where much of the land stands on edge. However, poor land does not need to lead to poor farming and poor living. All of the ideas together do not offer a full explanation of the causes of low income.

Contributing Factors

In the opinions of leading students of the problem, two facts are of decisive importance in generating the low-farm income problem. One is the fact that our farm population the most rapidly growing sector the American people, yet the tot number of farms is declining. It estimated that in the next decad 168 young men in farm-operat families will reach the age of 20 f every 100 expected deaths and retir ments of men 20 to 64 years old. Th fact that the farm population producing more people than it ca absorb is not in itself a bad thin That is where we get much of th manpower to build our cities and t run our factories. However, it do mean that a continuous stream people must move out of farmin into other pursuits. Otherwise, w get too many people on the far trying to scratch a living from to few acres, bidding up the price land against each other, and too poo to buy the necessary machinery an livestock to run an efficient farm.

The second significant fact is th the bulk of the low-farm-incom areas, especially in the South, hav not only the most rapidly growin population but is also predom nantly rural and limited as to i dustry. The areas marked "serious in a special low-farm-income ma prepared by the Department of Agr culture, contain a total of 13½ mi lion people, but there is not a sing city with as many as 150,000 peopl in the entire area. Movement awa from farms is heavy, but it is n heavy enough.

Here, then, we have the mo basic cause of poverty in America agriculture. Professor Shultz of th University of Chicago explains th origin of these two basic causes follows: As the economy of o country developed, certain regio fell behind. The reasons for this w are not sure of and in any case, fu discussion of them would take far afield. In the Appalachians an the Ozarks they are probably ge graphical. They lie in the difficul of establishing good roads an access to markets. In the Cotton be perhaps it was the old plantatio system that existed before the Civ War.

Although there was probably n too much difference between th various communities at time of se

Home of a Low-Income Farm Family

ement, marked differences began develop. The population and mposition of the low-income com-unities tend to differ from those in e more industrialized areas. In eathitt County, Ky., for example, ofessor Schultz points out, 54 per-nt of the population was under years of age in 1940 as compared th 36 percent in Grundy County, wa, for the same year. With a gher proportion of the population iow working age, naturally the per pita income is lower. Further, the sources available to invest in edu-tion and training are less per per-n so that not only are smaller rcentages of people in the produc-ve age groups but the acquired pacity of the individual is smaller. rther, as the differences in edu-tion and background between the w-income areas and other regions ow larger, the cultural impediment moving out of the low-farm-in-me areas becomes greater.

If our conclusions regarding the ain cause of poverty in rural Amer-a are correct, then the chief remedy r alleviating low farm income lies tside the farm boundaries. To be re, we must work with these farm-s on the land, show them improved oduction techniques, help them th credit. But the chief remedy is reduce the pressure of population the land by keeping the economy a high level to provide plenty of bs for the excess farm population, encouraging the movement of in-stry into low-income farming eas, and by facilitating the flow population away from the low-come farming areas. For the latter need to provide education for the unger generation, not only in agri-lture but in nonfarm careers as ll. We should keep the farm pulation informed as to oppor-nities in other sectors of the eco-my. Perhaps we should grant edit to help pay the cost of moving nonfarm pursuits. Conceivably me low-income farm families pre-r to stay where they are, but until ey have the knowledge and the eans of choosing an alternate urse of action they do not have e opportunity to make a free oice.

The Record in the Past and Outlook for the Future

The last part of this paper is directed toward the question of what we are doing about the low-income-farm problem. The answer is, not enough. Price supports are of little help to farmers who produce so little that even 100 percent of parity will not raise their incomes in any appreciable degree. We have research activities, the findings of which are channeled to the farms through the Extension Service and also the Soil Conservation Service. Yet who comes out to Extension meetings, signs up with the Soil Conservation District, subscribes to farm magazines, and is eager to learn the latest farming methods? It is the up-to-date scientific farmer, not the low-income farmer. This fact is borne out by experience as well as by scientific studies.

This is not to condemn those who work with farmers. Low-income farmers are harder to reach, they may be less cooperative, they frequently lack resources to carry out recommendations, and their problems are so difficult that very detailed planning is needed. An overworked county agent often does not have the necessary time to work with the low-income groups.

We also have vocational training for the young. However, in the low-income Southern states only 20 percent of all expenditures for vocational training in 1953 went for training in industry and commerce. The rest went for agriculture and home economics. When we realize that what is needed is a larger movement away from agriculture in order to relieve low-income farmers, this allocation does not appear to be realistic.

In citing these shortcomings, I do not mean to imply that the picture is all bad. Some farsighted legislation has been passed and ably implemented to the benefit of low-income farmers. The Farm Credit Administration provides many locally administered forms of credit to farmers, from farm purchase loans to seed and feed loans to loans to cooperatives. With the help of this agency many farmers were able to obtain enough capital to run more profitable farms and many tenants and sharecroppers have become farm owners.

A unique program, specifically directed toward low-income farmers is that of the Farmers Home Administration. This agency, which has existed under different names since 1933 aims at rural rehabilitation of farmers who cannot obtain credit elsewhere. It does a lot of its business in the South. Loans are for farm purchase, for production, including feed, seed, and machinery, and also for subsistence. A special feature of most of the loans is that along with the credit goes supervision and technical help in planning the farm and home. At the end of 1946, 839,000 farmers had received about a billion dollars under this program. On June 30, 1946, 90.6 percent of the total amount due had been paid. These figures are evidence that our low-income farmers have the desire and the ability to improve themselves if given the opportunity.

A program launched only recently is Farm and Home Planning by the State Extension Services throughout the country. Under this program many county Extension staffs have been augmented by technicians whose special duty is to work primarily with young farmers, many of whom have little to start with. The objective is to work out long-range plans that will achieve the goals of the farm family. Finally, only this spring, the President of the United States charged the Secretary of Agriculture to launch a program of research, education, and action especially directed toward low-income areas. In the preliminary work that led to this program, the importance of encouraging the flow of people from the farm to industry and commerce was recognized.

I hope that I have not given the impression that we fully understand all the causes and know all the ways of overcoming the low-farm-income problem. The task is difficult, it will take a long time and we have much to learn. We can learn much from past experience. One of the lessons it teaches us is that we cannot force people to do what is against their wishes.

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, by thy gracious Providence our harvests have been gathered and are laid in store.

Response: We praise Thee for Thy goodness unto us.

Pastor: Most loving Creator, who didst cause the dry land to appear, we see Thy handiwork in the good earth which Thou has given us to till.

Response: The land which we till belongs to Thee, O Lord, and Thou hast made us stewards to care for it. Help us to cherish our land and never to abuse it, and to hand it down strong and productive, doing this as a thank offering unto Thee, and in thoughtful remembrance of all who will use the land after us.

Pastor: We have not always been good stewards of the land Thou hast given us, and we have reaped the harvest of our selfishness and waste in fields that have become barren, in forests that have been stripped, and in destructive floods and dust storms that have brought suffering and economic loss to farm and city alike.

Response: Forgive our sinfulness, O God, and help us to show true repentance by practising conservation in the use of our national resources.

Pastor: O God, we see Thy love in sunshine and rain.

Response: We thank Thee, O God, for the rain and the sunshine that help our crops to grow.

Pastor: In our struggle for the abundant life we find that Thy world, O Lord, is friendly to our labors and that Thy laws can be depended upon.

Response: We thank Thee, O God, for giving us minds that can read Thy laws, and reading them, invent tools and machines to make work easier and more productive. We thank Thee for the energy of streams and rivers that can be turned into power to light our homes and operate our farms.

Pastor: From our farms we obtain the meat, eggs, milk, vegetables and fibre which sustain life.

Response: We thank Thee, O God, for the cows we milk, for the hogs and livestock we raise, for eggs and fowl, for fibre for our clothing, and for the vegetables from our gardens. We thank Thee for the crops from which we receive our cash income.

Pastor: Trees provide us with fruit, keep our fields from eroding, are used to build our homes and barns, and beautify the mountains unto which we look up from our farms for hope and peace.

Response: We thank Thee, O God, for the trees which set their strong roots firmly in our fields and forests and give us shade in the heat of the day.

Pastor: Thou hast placed us in families and in communities and nations, O Lord, and in wisdom hast caused us to need each other.

Response: We are especially grateful for our friends and loved ones and neighbors. We thank Thee for our homes and schools and churches, and for the freedoms we enjoy in a land of liberty.

Pastor: O God, Thou hast commanded us to go into all the world as ambassadors of Christ with the good news of reconciliation and redemption.

Response: Forgive us, O God, for our coldness of heart and our neglect of Thy Commandments. We confess that sometimes we have been so concerned about our own salvation and about our own little church building and fellowship, that we have forgotten the millions in our world who do not know Thee, who are bound in the prison-house of sin and ignorance, and who are waiting for us to bring unto them the Gospel of redemption and release.

All: O God, we would show the sincerity of our gratitude to Thee by committing ourselves afresh to Christ, our Savior, and to the world-wide mission of His body the Church. Accept this offering of ourselves, we pray Thee, in Jesus' name. Amen.

—Kenneth C. Holmstrup
Greeneville, Tennessee

Resource Material on Theology and Rural Life

• A compilation of about 125 page of mimeographed and printed re source material on Theology an Rural Life has been prepared for in structors in theological seminaries o others who are interested in suc material. It was originally prepare for the consideration of a semina which met in New York for tw consecutive seasons. And becaus there were many expressions of in terest, it was decided to duplicat the material and make it availabl to others.

This compilation consists of inte pretations of the writings of theolo gians whose teachings have mad mention of rural life; notes on rura sociologists who have analyzed th rural community; and papers on th synthesis of theology and rural so ciology, or consideration of the rela tionship of the two.

This resource material on Theolog and Rural Life may be obtaine from the Department of Town an Country Church, National Counc of the Churches of Christ in th U.S.A., 257 Fourth Avenue, Ne York 10, N. Y. It comes complete i a snap-back binder, which may b used for additional relevant materia for $2.00.

Respect of Land

• In a recent issue of THE CHRI TIAN CENTURY Kermit Eby tel of his ancestors' respect of the lan These ancestors of his were Me nonite-Brethren and "believed it t be their religious responsibility t God and their fellows to leave the farms more productive than whe they bought them. They regarde themselves as stewards of the goo earth."

ew 4-H Club Unit for Kansas

\ new unit of three native lime-
ıe buildings, health center, med-
ion chapel and conference audi-
um, will be completed next sum-
to be used in the new year-
nd program of Kansas 4-H clubs
Rock Springs Ranch, south of
ıction City, Kansas.

The unit, to cost from $40,000 to
,000, was made possible through
gift of Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Jelli-
of Junction City. The buildings
resent the 4-H's of the 4-H farm
ıth program: the conference, the
ıd and hands; the chapel; the
ırt; and the health center.

The health center will contain
ırters and office space for the
rse, doctor's office, two wards to
e for three people each and isola-
n room. The chapel will seat fifty
ople plus space for a choir. The
ıference-auditorium building will
t 125 and have a stage at one end.
may be used with conference
les or as an auditorium.

The building has been designed to
the rustic character of the Flint
ll region of high hilly pastures.

Mr. Jellison has been a member
the Kansas committee on 4-H
rk since it started and is now vice-
ıirman of the board of trustees of
Kansas 4-H Foundation.

"I consider the 4-H clubs the
atest agency we have in our state
the development of good homes,
ilding character and good citizen-
p, and at the same time, the devel-
ment of our agricultural resources
Kansas," Jellison said in a state-
nt prepared for the ground break-
ceremonies at Rock Springs on
ly 2.

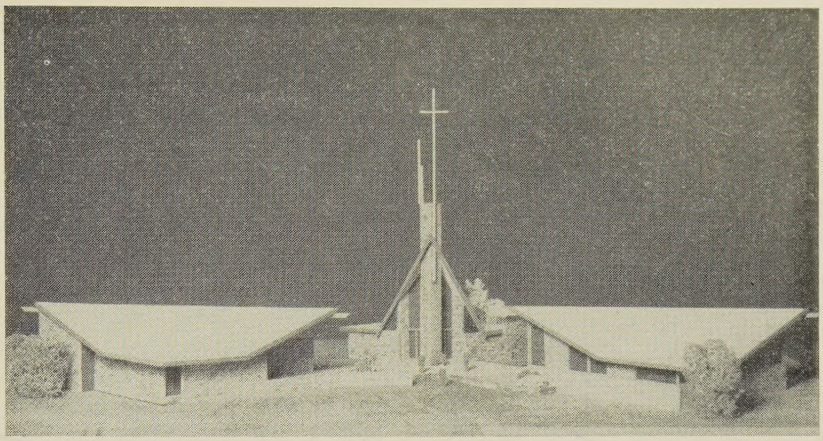
—Charlotte Norlin

From Correspondence

ar Editor:

Town and Country Church has
en coming to my desk for some
ıe now. It is just splendid, well
t together, and subject matter is
ost interesting from beginning to
d.

—Alfred M. Colby
(Retired business man)



4-H Club Unit at Rock Springs Ranch, Kansas

The Church in the Mining Camp

BLAIR McPHERSON

• When I arrived at this charge in Alberta I found that it was made up of three congregations. Two were drawn from people living in mining camps. The third point on the charge was some fifteen miles away in the center of a good farming district. The congregation naturally was made up entirely of people whose whole concern was agricultural.

An Unbridgeable Gap

Between the mining camps and the country village there were only fifteen miles, but sermons prepared for the people of the mining camp seemed to be off-center in the country village, while such seasons as Thanksgiving which have great meaning for the farmer had little appeal to the miner. I tried to increase understanding between the various congregations by bringing out the different approaches to business, work and society.

It was soon evident, however, that relationships between the churches was unnatural. The people of the small agricultural village almost never met the people from the mining towns. Since the village is small they did most of their shopping and social calling in another agricultural center which was nine miles in the opposite direction from the mines. Their bank was there, as were the main store of the "cooperative" which served them, the municipal office, the school superintendent, the school for the higher grades, and in the winter time the curling rink to which many of them went. The minister of the United Church in the larger center often met them during the week and because the young people went to school and attended his youth groups he often married the members of the families from my congregation. My own relationship was that of appearing at the church on Sunday to worship with them, making special trips to visit them, but seldom meeting them on any other occasion or having much in common to talk about apart from the church.

Readjustment

A year later, a readjustment was made which related the country village to the agricultural center and related the two mining camps to two other and larger towns which are also dependent upon the mines and all within an area of seven miles from each other. It is too early to assess the results but the immediate reaction has been that this is a more

(*Continued on Page* 14)

(*Continued from Page* 13)

natural relationship between the churches. Mine has become a more satisfying type of ministry. My whole attention can now be turned to the mining camps. The other minister also feels the naturalness of the arrangement and when adjustment can be made to lighten his burden he will have a satisfying relationship.

The result of the readjustment of pastoral boundaries was something new in church relationships, as far as the United Church of Canada is concerned. It has become a four-point pastoral charge with two ministers. All expenses are paid cooperatively except local upkeep and repairs. Each church pays in proportion to size and ability, but all share equally in the concern of the ministers.

We feel that this new church relationship has helped to remove some of the provincialism among the churches. For example, soon after the arrival of my fellow minister on the charge he was confined to bed for six weeks with jaundice. I was able to continue all services and all necessary activities until he was well again. Today I am confined to a state of utter silence in order to overcome a case of laryngitis and my partner is carrying on with all four services. The feeling of the people seems to be one of gratefulness that we can make such arrangements without seriously upsetting the work of the congregations.

"Melting Pot"

More than any other place in this province and probably more than any other place in Canada these mining camps are a melting pot of the races. For the most part the people who are there today are first generation Canadians or the sons and daughters of people who came from other countries. Originally there were a good proportion of Anglo-Saxons—mostly English, Scottish and Welsh. However, Italians and Slavic peoples have been in evidence during recent years and lately a proportion of Dutch people. The Dutch, however, do not appear to be going into the mines but rather into the dependent businesses.

The result of the mixture of nationalities seems to be a fairly complete absence of racial discrimination. A group of teen-age people at a camp last summer did not seem to know of any case they could remember where anyone had been discriminated against because of race or color. There is considerable intermarriage and intermingling in all community affairs. Unfortunately, the latter does not hold true for the church. One of the severest problems in the church of the town in which I live is the fact that it has evidently been made up of Anglo-Saxons for many years. We have come now to the place where the Anglo-Saxon element has largely passed away and the church shows the lack of new and younger people to carry on. This has undoubtedly been unintentional but simply a short-sighted lack of Christian charity for other groups. Fortunately this is not true of all our four churches—one especially shows evidence of being able to have the fellowship of new Canadians.

"Camps"

The fact that we call these residential areas *camps* instead of towns and villages has a real significance. Actually the two larger centers are incorporated towns while the two smaller areas are not. To be unincorporated in this Canadian province simply means that there is no local government. The residential areas apparently were originally laid out and provided for by the companies which own the mines. Today they are called improvement districts which means that they are taken care of by the provincial government which is centered three hundred and sixty miles away in Edmonton, the provincial capital. To call them "camps" then is to suggest that they are impermanent and only a place to reside while the work in the mine continues. The result of the "camp attitude" is the same as in other impermanent settlements. Houses generally are not well kept on the outside even though they are usually very clean and well furnished within.

The resulting social attitude is of more significance to us because it has its influence directly and indirectly on the people of the churches. Having no local government leaves us with the feeling of being unable to do anything for ourselves. The result is an attitude of social irresponsibility. One of the most needed social attitudes is the feeling that people are responsible for their own community and church members are responsible for their own church.

Major Influences

The two important powers affecting the economic life of the whole mining area are, of course, labor and management. There have been the usual amount of hard bargains driven by both labor and management although it has now been some years since there has been an actual strike.

If the mixture of races, the "camp attitude," and the labor-management relation are the major influences in the life of the people (as we have been suggesting), then what are their effects on the life of the churches?

As we have pointed out, the fact that the United Church of Canada was originally an Anglo-Saxon church has been an added drawback in the matter of reaching new Canadians. The normal reserve of English-speaking people, coupled with the loss of evangelical enthusiasm which marked the church for many years, is now showing up in the fact that there are few European or non-Anglo-Saxon people who are active workers in the church.

The "camp attitude" shows itself in general lack of concern for appearance of church buildings. The fact that social life is not of a high order seems to produce a feeling of wanting to get away from it all. This, of course, contributes to the drinking problem common to most working areas. But the desire for escape has a more interesting aspect which is better for the people concerned but also detrimental to the church. Hunting, fishing and just plain driving rank high among the recreations—especially in summer. Organized sport also makes its inroads on church loyalties.

In the matter of labor-management relations there is little evidence that

ministry of any of the churches ever openly taken the side of ıer. Nevertheless there is small dence of labor within the fellow-p of the church. It is evident that oring men do not hold the church high regard, nor has the church n able to reach any number of m. The saddest failure of the ıer's church is simply that it does serve him except for baptisms, rriages and funerals.

uth Groups

How, then, has our church served people? There *are* areas in which church seems to be received and se have mainly to do with youth. nday schools and youth groups are the whole better attended than y are in other parts of the prov-e. These children and young ople are evidently as capable and y to manage as any others are. ıey accept responsibility, and the y fact that their lives are not ed with as many secular activities the usual urban youngster makes possible to reach more of them.

I am convinced that the ministry ich will build a church in a min-g town will be one which is long ough for the minister to become ntified with the people of all ıks who need his help. These ople are not anti-religious, they ve simply been betrayed so often ıt they feel religion has nothing which a working man can de-ıd.

—Excerpted from an article in *The Rural Church*

November

MARVIN L. VANGILDER

ovember is whispering in my dreams,
elling me stories of open fields
nd harvest time
nd chilly air,
reathing the odors of harvest time
own my collar
nd into my heart.
nd then I see pictures
f gray corn fodder in the shock,
ith pumpkin and squash around their base,
nd silver geese across the sky,
nd steeples in the distant haze
ith people giving thanks.
November whispers in my dreams,
nd I give thanks for other things
ut for November too.

Some Problems of a Rural Pastor*

• Even though this is a heartbreaking place to work and live, we feel that we must stay until we have laid a good foundation for a solid church program in the community. God doesn't always call us to places of luxury and pleasure to serve him. In fact, the places where a witness for Him is most needed are often places where we would rather not be. After all, it isn't to success that God calls us, but to service.

It is interesting to note how little we learn as a nation in regard to conservation. Seventy-five or eighty years ago this part of the country was richly covered with the most lush stand of timber in the nation. Fir, pine and redwood were here in abundance. But today we stand just about where we did after the first wave of logging hit this country. Then they stripped the land bare of all timber—what wasn't worth hauling to the mill, they burned. Now they are doing the same thing all over again. It is frightening to think of what will be here ten or even fifteen years hence.

There is no doubt that we must take a firm stand on the use of natural resources. They are God's gifts to us and are to be used with a proper sense of Christian stewardship. In many instances our most prominent church members are those who are "making a killing" on the timber. They cooperate in the church program, contribute well, and attend the services. They are the ones who make big contributions for new church buildings.

Now, our church needs a new building and one such man has promised that he will donate all the lumber that is needed. To me this poses an ethical problem. Should the church condone this man's logging activities, which definitely aren't done in a sense of Christian Stewardship, by accepting his gift? Or, can it afford to alienate this man and others in the community by refusing to accept his gift in the name of Christian Stewardship?

Of course, I have no doubt that the church will accept his gift. In fact, the session is already discussing the kind of a building it wants.

I once knew a minister who served in a gambling town. The little church was very poor and got about fifteen months behind on his salary. One of the gamblers in town, who regularly sent his children to Sunday school, came to him one night and offered to make up the salary. My friend refused to take the money. It was shortly after that that he had to leave town, not because the gamblers ran him out, but because his own session learned that he had refused to take money from the gambler.

This seems to me to be the same kind of a problem, and it certainly provides a challenge for one's preaching.

* From a letter received by the Editor.

A Creek

Have you ever heard the song of a creek
As it winds its way, trying to seek
The open sea, or just some bay
Where it may go its own way?

Some think this song is monotonous,
But they fail to hear its full chorus.
There are many who sing together—
The birds, the bees, the trees, the weather.

Each adds a bit in its own way,
The song ever changing from day to day,
Listen close and you can hear
Tones of sorrow, of laughter, and cheer.

Soft and mellow when all is calm—
But raging in fury when comes a storm,
All blended together to form a tune,
That never ends from night until noon.

—BOB MORAUSKI

Heifers for Germany

• Recent gifts of heifers to the hard-pressed refugee families in Germany included a shipment of 132 animals, sailing from New Orleans.

Churches of Michigan joined in a state-wide drive in support of the heifer project and gave the Rev. Theodore A. Tuenge of Mount Clemens a two-month leave of absence to care for the "Wolverine Shipment," a cargo of seventy heifers for the Christian Rural Overseas Program of Farm Aid to Europe.

BOOK REVIEW

Community Leadership for Public Education. By Truman M. Pierce, Edward C. Merrill, Jr., Craig Wilson and Ralph B. Kimbrough. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. 1955. $6.00.

The purpose of this book, according to the authors, is to show how to mobilize the social forces of communities to bring better schools and better educational programs. That public education has responsibility for community improvement is a basic proposition underlying the entire structure and determining the point of view of the book. Accordingly, "A different kind of working relationship between school people and lay citizens is necessary before a school program is possible which is reflected in a role so intimate to community living." The creation of such working relationships is a very important function of educational leadership.

If educational leadership is to be effective, it of necessity must be based on a knowledge of community organization, power structure, group relationships, patterns of group action, the nature and origin of conflicts, the importance of custom and tradition, and the processes of decision making and how change occurs.

The first four sections of the book present, largely by means of illustrations written in non-technical words, the sociological and psychological concepts and ideas necessary to an understanding of how communities operate and how leadership is effectively exercised. These sections are in reality a treatise on applied social psychology.

The fifth section of the book is an application of the basic concepts and illustrations presented in the preceding four sections. While one chapter of this section is devoted exclusively to the unique place of the school administrator in the leadership structure, what has been written is equally applicable to leaders in other aspects of community life. Certainly ministers, social workers, civic and political leaders will find that the contents of other chapters are as valuable to them as to the school administrator.

Perhaps the chief shortcoming of this well-written book is that it does not go far enough in giving specific examples of how the principles presented have affected the development of school programs highly related to community improvement.

—Howard A. Dawson
Executive Secretary
Department of Rural Education
National Education Association

Prayer of One About to Work on Sunday

Dear Lord,
I know that this is Your Day,
A Day when all the earth ought to bow before Thee
And keep silence;
Today I have to break that silence
With the noise of my work,
And I'm sorry,
You know my heart—
That I would not work just to desecrate the Day
Or add another shekel to my bank account;
But I'm under pressure, Lord;
Caught up in forces that I can't handle,
That drive me on, today and every other day;
I'm like a slave, with no days off;
So, Church is out for me.
You know how I'd like to be in Church today,
Singing the hymns and getting the lift I need
To keep up my faith in life and in People around me.
I always feel better when I go to Church,
I wish I could be there today,
But I've got to work. Or at least it looks that way to me.
If You can show me different, I'm ready to listen.
God, don't let me get away from You,
Or let my heart grow cold;
And I promise if You will be with me today
And other days like this when I can't help myself,
That the first chance I have to break this chain
Which has made me a prisoner to a seven-day-a-week deal,
With Your help, I'll break it.
Today I pray, not only for myself,
But for my family that I love,
And for my Christian friends
Gathered in Thy House this Day.
May the minister preach a good sermon
That will warm people's hearts;
And may some of that warmth in some strange way
Reach all the way to me.
As I pray for them, I hope
That some of them are praying for me,
Even as I work this Day,
Your Day, Lord. *Amen*

—Ray F. Magnuson

"Protect the Family Farm Now"

• Letters from farm women in forty-five states are summarized by Representative Caya Knutson, of Minnesota, member of the House Committee on Agriculture, also sometimes called "the Farm Woman's Congresswoman," in an article in June, 1955, BETTER FARMING, Philadelphia, formerly COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

After reading the letters, Mrs. Knutson writes:

"They tell a story I wish every public official and every member of Congress could know and feel as I do now.

"The spirit and courage they reflect, the brave struggle to stay in farming during these difficult times, make me prouder than ever that I have the opportunity to represent the farm women of this country.

"They show clearly why we must take up the fight to protect the family-type farm."

On the editorial page of BETTER FARMING appeared one of a series of editorials relating to the family-type farm. Here's an excerpt:

"Are present programs good enough to get farming safely through this in-between period?

"Unbiased opinion is that they are not. Three necessary further measures are cited:

"Revision of present programs to better protect the family-type farm;

"More aggressive research to develop new uses for farm products and economies in distribution;

"And strengthening the bargaining postion of farmers."

A Reader Writes

• Let me express my personal appreciation for the September issue. Its content is good and very interesting. That goes for some of the smaller articles as well as the big ones.

—Eugene J. Moore
Sterling, Illinois

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